

issue 1

the introductory issue

“KOLLECTIV”



DEAR READER —

Hello, welcome to issue #1 of Kollectiv. We are a leftist publication dedicated to bringing you economics, culture, politics and theory each month for free. We are a collective publication, which means all contributors are in control of what they write, and are free to participate in or sit out any issue. We come from various ideologies, beliefs and worldviews, but we are focused on what makes us alike, not what brings us apart.

With that being said, Kollectiv features many different viewpoints over many different topics. We hope each reader can come away with something from each issue, whether they be socialist, communist, anarchist, etc. Want to know how you can become a contributor? Email us at: kollectiv1917@gmail.com

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IN SUMMARY:

Capital, Chapter 1, Sec. 1.



Because an understanding of Marxian economics is important.

In this first section of Marx's great work, he outlines a critical theory in Marxian economics. That theory is the *labor theory of value*.

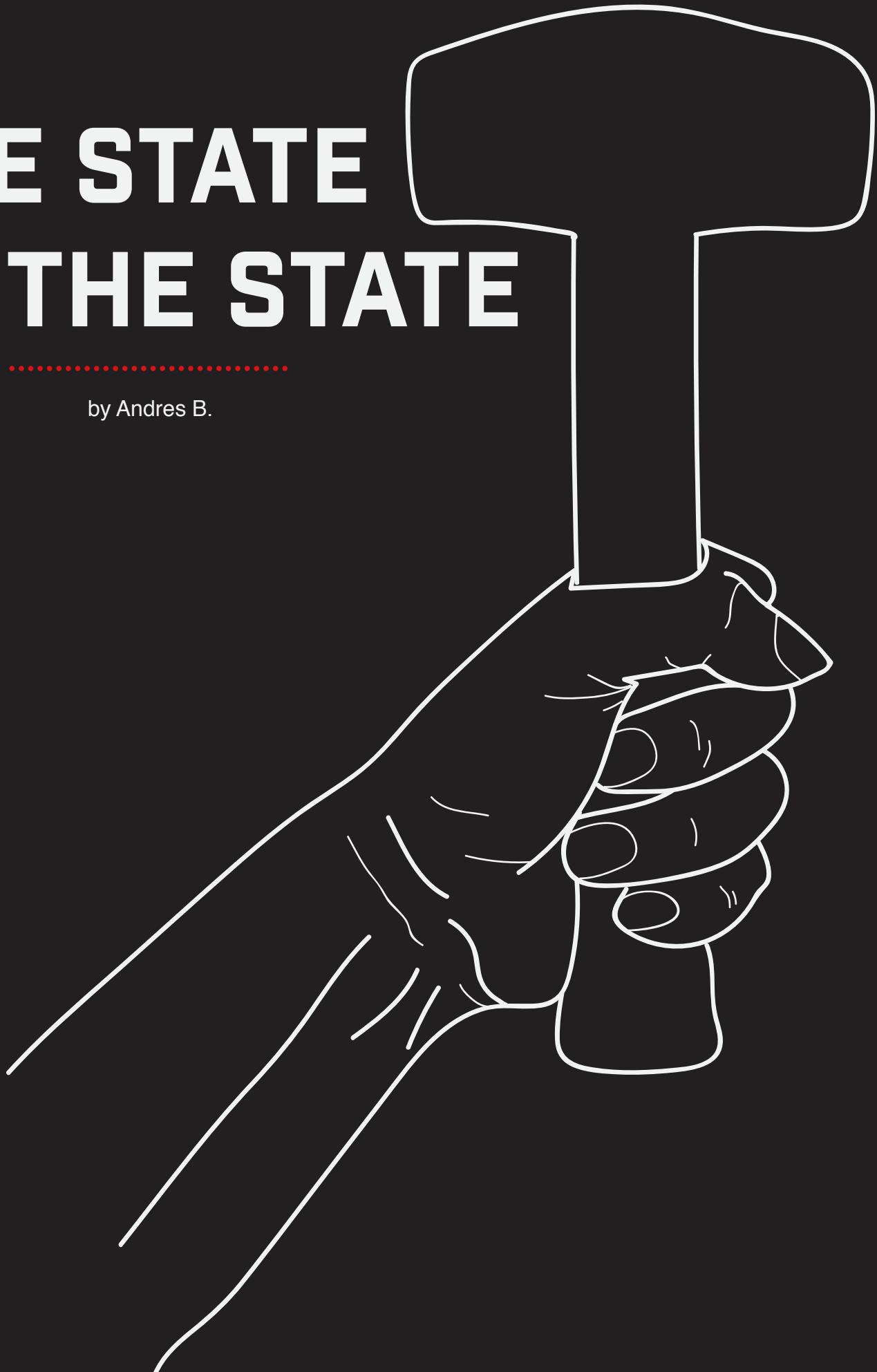
He begins by describing commodities, which are external things which can satisfy needs either directly (as in sustenance), or indirectly (as in means of production).

Marx then says that these commodities have both a use-value, and an exchange value. Use-value refers to something's usefulness. For example, a hammer has a use-value, and that use-value is that it can be used to build something. But a hammer also has an exchange value, which is its value relative to other things. For instance, the hammer may be worth be a pound of grain.

However, the hammer has no exchange value when it's not being compared to anything, it always needs another object to gain exchange value. But, the simple fact that two random commodities can be exchanged means that they both have something in which they can be compared. Marx explains that this is their value. Where does this value come from? From the labor it that is socially required to produce the commodity. Therefore, the value of a commodity comes from the amount of labor that was socially required to make that commodity.

THE STATE OF THE STATE

by Andres B.



According to a poll taken by the Pew Research Center which was published on May 3, 2017 only 20% of Americans today say that they can trust our government. With this historically significant drop in faith in our government many people today have begun to associate the government, the living embodiment of society, as a totally different entity than society itself. From the tax cuts of the Bush administration to the Supreme Court case of Citizens United VS FEC it has become apparent that the State no longer holds the majorities interests high. Instead the State, quietly and deadly, has been infiltrated by agents of the ruling class who have usurped the throne of the People in favor of protecting their own interests of greed, exploitation, and profits. We see this being proven daily. We see it in the fight for clean water in Flint and Dakota. We see this in the DNC'S downright deplorable sabotaging of candidate Bernie Sanders's bid for the White House. We see this in the corporate media's refusal to cover such things to protect their masters from being exposed. We see these things everywhere and daily. The People, rightly so, whether Right Wing or Left, feel isolated and abandoned by the State, the supposed incarnation of the People.

The ruling class has effectively instilled distrust in the State and has sullied its name. So much so that the idea of the State is no longer the idea of the People's voice and will being enacted but rather the ruling class's voice and will being enacted. But why has this happened? Why have the People been abandoned by the very thing that swore to protect them? The truth is simple: this illness we see in the American state is not an isolated incident, it is a symptom of capitalism. It can be seen in all capitalist societies from Russia to Germany, England, France, Mexico, Brazil, everywhere and anywhere that adopts the capitalist system will inevitably sacrifice democracy. As Vladimir I. Lenin stated "Democracy for an insignificant minority, democracy for the rich. That is the democracy of capitalist society." From this diagnoses we see that in a capitalist society the profit motive seeps into all aspects of society. In schools, the arts, media, and even the State itself, as powerful as it is, is left out shadowed by the mighty striving for capital. We see that there is no democracy in capitalism.

We see there is only oligarchy under the façade of democracy. We see the major Parties, the Parties who are allowed to successfully run for office due to their corporate funds, being apples of the same tree: the tree of the ruling class. Truly no representation for the working class can be seen in any way, shape, or form apart from choosing between two apples of the same tree. Some will say that this is just the way that it is, that we are to sit and be content with this system because it is “the only way”. They see no alternative, no different path to take. When in truth the path is bright, if not overgrown by brush, and takes only a mildly keen eye to spot. The complete and total abandonment of the capitalist system is the only cure for this plague of corruption within the State. No half measures can be taken, no reform. For so long as the capitalistic system stays in place so will corruption, so will tyranny of the minority, and so will exploitation. A drastic change is needed, a complete reexamining of the role of the State, a revolutionary reorganizing of powers.

Yet there are those who say that this reorganization of the State strips liberties from “special interests” and undoubtedly this is aimed at. These so called “special interests” are corporate interests and capitalist interests that need to be eradicated from the political process to ensure the rule of the People. We’ve seen half measures taken within the government, such as anti-bribery laws. These fail to cover corporate finance of campaigns for political office. In this day and age one cannot run a successful campaign without funding, and massive amounts of it, millions upon millions and when the majority of capital sits in the hands of the few (the ruling class) there is but one place to get the funds from: the ruling class. This effectively allows the Bourgeoisies more than just access to the political process; it allows them complete control of the political process. From buying politicians the Bourgeoisie tighten their cold grip upon the political process, using this leverage to propose, draft, and sign into law whatever they wish via their corrupted lapdog politicians.

What can be done? Obviously anti-corruption laws need to be tightened to include corporate campaign financers but still much more is needed. A massive eradication of the profit motive from the political process on all levels, the absolute and total removal of all politicians from office; Federal, State, and city, all must be reorganized and cleaned to ensure the survival of democracy. Afterwards new elections, publically funded elections, are to be put into effect. These elections must only include the Parties of the People, not the Parties of the bourgeoisie, and through this we can usher in a richer democracy with people of all walks of life, true representations of us as a whole, without the need for corporate funds, without the drive for capital and power, running for office and holding the positons honorably. We can safeguard the throne of the People, improve the representation of the masses to the point that it is not just a representation; it is the only representation. The will of the People cannot be sacrificed to ensure freedom for the ruling class; it cannot be drowned by capital. It must reign supreme, above all.

We will know we have succeeded when people look at the State and see themselves, their families, their friends, their mothers and fathers, children and siblings. When the idea of taxes is seen as charity, when soldiers are viewed as heroes and heroines, and when politicians are not viewed with skepticism but instead with admiration and respect. When we see congressmen being paid the average income and walk into the Congress meeting hall in sweaters and flannels, and when we see Blacks, Whites, gays, transsexuals, atheists, Hispanics, Arabic's and Jews among them. That is democracy. That is the solution. That is us. •

REJECTING THE EU:

Why the left should embrace Brexit

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Recently, despite the British people voting to leave the European Union, and despite many of these voters being fellow proletarians, the British left has repeatedly tried to institute policies such as a second referendum, staying in the single market, and so on.

This rejection of a democratic mandate is dangerous. The referendum that was held wasn't like the general elections - it turns out, the big, exploitative businesses and corporations went out and supported the Remain side of the campaign.

This isn't surprising. The EU may as well be called the Employer's Union - its excessive regulations haven't benefitted workers in the UK at all, only the consumer, and even still, regulations on the shapes of bananas hardly benefit the consumer.

The advent of the possibility of a European Army is dangerous - this, combined with NATO, creates an ever-dangerous omnipresence of the West in global affairs, rivaling that of the cold war. The USA has been responsible for more than 20 million deaths since WWII with regards to its own imperialism, so we should always fear another Western military powerhouse.

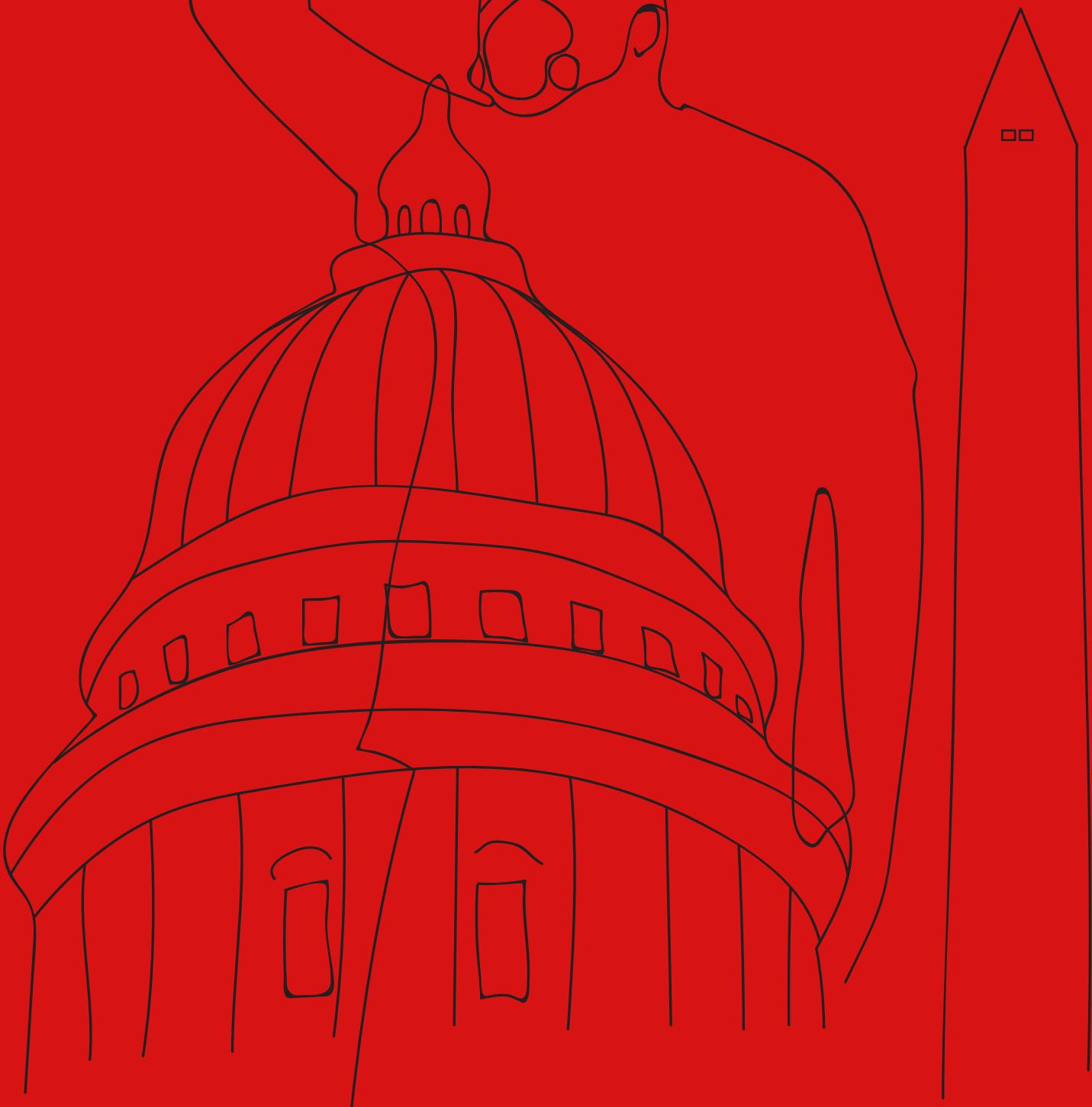
As well as imperialism, all Socialists should fear the EU because of its opposition to democracy and European culture. Democracy is, inherently, a Socialist concept, and so we should fight with all of our strength to oppose the EU, that consistently reruns referendums when defeated. As well as this, if we, as Socialists, are to stand for the people, then we must also stand for our people's culture, and languages, and this means against the EU.

Going back to the US - one European nation is better than 28. A single nation, with a single currency, parliament, and so on, is far easier to deal with in terms of the USA's domination of the world's economy and wider society. This is evidenced by TTIP - the corporations within both the EU and the USA are soon going to be able to, very easily, exploit workers and markets, with little protection and regulation of the industries in which such corporations are participating.

Overall, the left should fight arduously against the globalism and liberal capitalism of the EU, and support efforts of various European nations to break the shackles of EU domination. Although many anti-EU movements are right-wing, we can change this through our combined influences in the main political parties, to change their stances on the EU, which will, in turn, create a popular, leftist, opposition to the EU, that has never been seen before. •

PACIFISTIC REVOLUTION?

by Alex Robak



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ome may see the proletarian revolution as a movement that can be accomplished in a pacifistic manner, guiding the working people to communism without any bloodshed. However, I do believe that if we are to bring about a change as large as the downfall of the capitalist system, it will not be a revolution of peace, in which nobody is harmed. If history has shown us anything, it is that most revolutions only succeed with bloodshed. I am in no way advocating for mass violence. However, I see that violence may be the only way to bring about the destruction of the capitalist system. This downfall will not be pretty, but it is something that unfortunately must be done.

If we look at the factor of violence in a historical context, we can see that it is the revolutions that make use of violence to progress their movement that end up succeeding. One example of this is the Russian revolution. V.I Lenin and the Bolshevik party were successful in toppling the bourgeois provisional government because of their use of violence towards opposing parties such as the Russian Nationalists, the Mensheviks and the Makhnovist black army.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin is often quoted as saying “You can not make a revolution in white gloves.” In this quote, he is simply stating that if one were to hypothetically make a revolution in white gloves, they would no longer be white, they would be red from the blood of the revolution. He is correct in saying this simply due to the fact that most great revolutions will never take hold unless the use of violence is implemented.

Another example of violence used to further a successful revolution would be the Chinese communist revolution of 1949. This revolution was headed by the Communist Party, lead by Chairman Mao Tse-Tung. It was in this revolution that Chairman Mao, with the support of the peasantry of China were able to topple the nationalist government. This revolution was not without bloodshed, however, as almost 2 Million Chinese died in the revolution that would eventually result in the victory of the Communist Party.

One of the famous quotes iterated by Chairman Mao would be this: “A revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another.” This is a correct analysis of historical revolutions. He is right in saying that a revolution is far removed from any of those mundane tasks such as having a dinner party, writing an essay, painting a picture, or doing embroidery. A revolution is far above that. A successful revolution does not come without some bloodshed on both sides of the revolution. Chairman Mao knew that this was the first step in a victory over the bourgeoisie, and he used violence to his advantage to liberate the peasantry of China from the oppression of the bourgeois class.

One example of a revolution that did not use violence to its advantage would be the German Revolution of 1918-1919. In this revolution, the German Social Democratic Party attempted to reform the German system of government to form a parliamentary republic.

This new system of government had plans to integrate the bourgeoisie into the socialist society that was to be formed by the Social Democratic Party. At the beginning of the revolution, Germany was at war with Russia, who was having their own revolution. Despite the chaos that was already ensuing on the eastern front, Rosa Luxemburg and the Social Democratic Party took this opportunity to seize control of the German Parliament. Unfortunately, the Social Democrats were not able to gain the support of the military in the endeavour. This resulted in their revolution being squashed. The leader of the Social Democrats, Rosa Luxemburg was later imprisoned and killed at the age of 47. This revolution was unsuccessful at establishing a socialist society within Germany for two reasons. Firstly, they did not have enough support within the German Military. Secondly, because the Social Democratic Party took the parliamentary option, rather than the way of bloody revolution.

In conclusion, we have historically examined a few of the many revolutions with Marxist aims that have taken place since 1848. This being said, it has only been the revolutions that have employed violence to progress their movement. The revolutions mentioned within this article are only a few of the many revolutions such as Cuba, Burkina Faso, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that have been forced to utilize violence with the aim to establish a society that is based on scientific Marxism. Violence should never be our first option in leading a revolution. However, we should not be afraid to use violence to liberate the proletariat. •

THE CASE FOR LABOR CAMPS

by @longlivestalin

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stance I have taken ever since I became a Stalinist is that labor camps are the most effective means of punishment for counter-revolutionaries. The two dominant beliefs I've seen amongst the far-left is either imprisoning or just executing counter-revolutionaries. Forced labor doesn't seem to be the favored method of punishment. Here I will look at why I believe that it's the most effective method and why some may not think so.

To really explain my stance, I feel it is best to look at the other method and display their flaws and how labor camps resolve them. Starting off with standard imprisonment, why just throw the offender in a cell and have them sit there and make the citizens pay for it through taxation? That is a burden on the people. Why should we burden the citizens with paying for the imprisonment of counter-revolutionaries?

Secondly there is the view that counter-revolutionaries should simply be killed. While I agree that there are some that are too dangerous to keep around in a socialist country that would likely be withstanding attacks from outside capitalist nations as well. However, there are some counter-revolutionaries that may just be misguided or not a danger.

Those counter-revolutionaries could possibly be converted, so why kill them and eliminate the possibility of gaining a comrade?

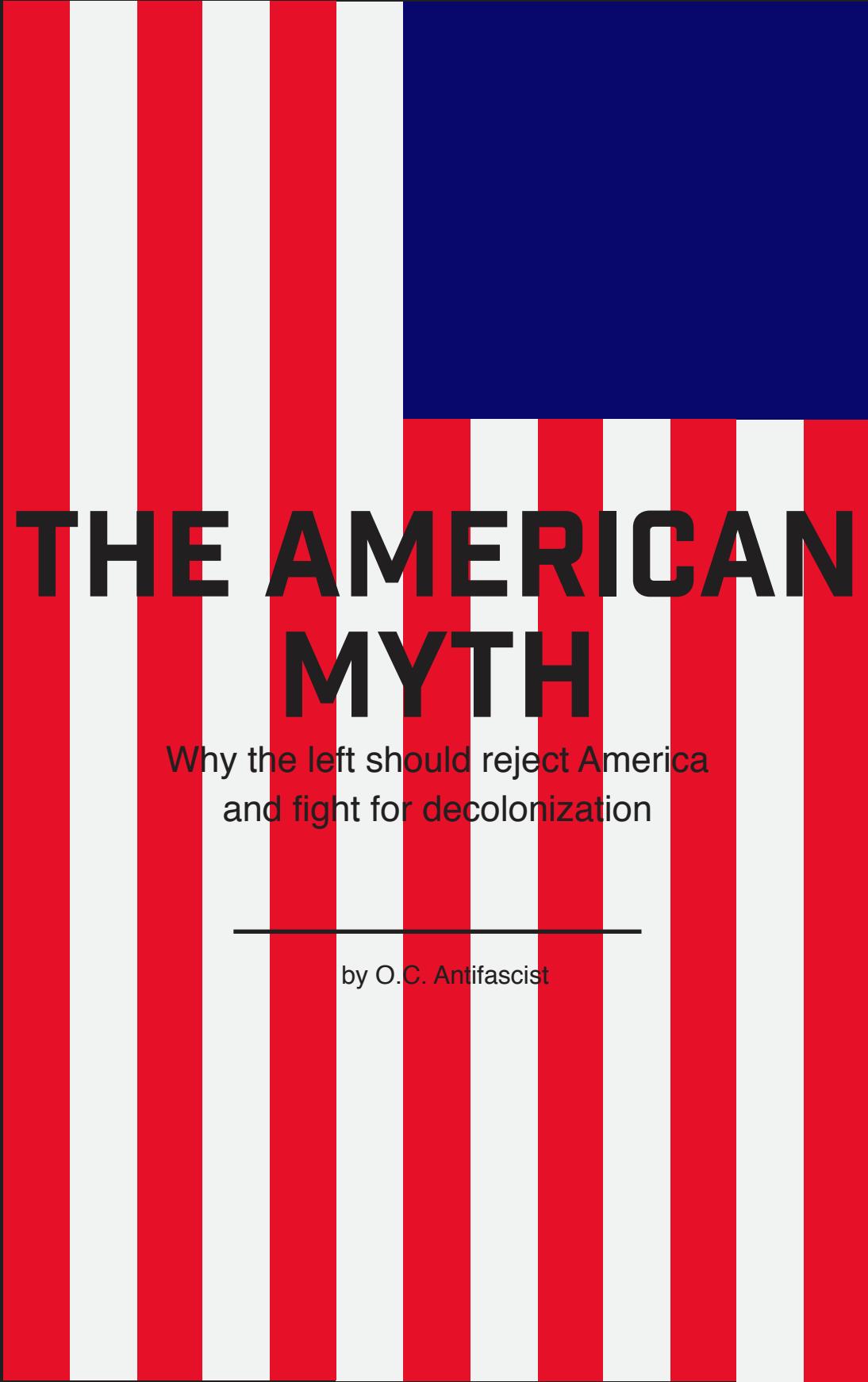
Now, I believe putting counter revolutionaries in labor camps is the most efficient way of dealing with them for various reasons. If they are sitting in a prison cell, then as I said, they would be a burden on the people. However, if they are made to do work such as constructing bridges, roads, buildings, goods, etc. then they would be doing something that contributes to society and infrastructure. There is the argument that they would do the work poorly or sabotage the project and could result in what they constructed collapsing or failing or what have you. The solution to this issue would be an extension onto their sentence or they would be made to work on projects that have little room to be sabotaged.

A major reason I believe in the use of labor camps is that through the hard labor, there would be counter-revolutionaries that would convert and become communists.

I believe this because there would obviously be capitalist counter revolutionaries, and in making them do the work that they used to make others do and profit off of the exploitation, they would come to realize the error of their thinking and would understand what the working class had been through. After toiling for days or longer on end, would the capitalist not eventually see that the profiting off of the labor of the workers that they used to do was wrong? Of course to make it most effective, re-education could also be done within those camps. Now, imagine what I have already stated but on top of it, they have almost daily reminders that they used to profit off of exactly what they're doing now. It would be putting the capitalist in the shoes of the worker in order to make them experience their plight and their desire to get what they deserve for the work they are doing. In doing so, I believe that a great many would be converted to communism.

In closing, the use of other methods of punishment for counter-revolutionaries besides forced labor would not work well. Simple imprisonment is a burden on the people and counter-revolutionaries deserve worse than just sitting in a cell.

Killing counter-revolutionaries is a wasted opportunity, the opportunity being the chance of converting them to communism. Also, wouldn't it be ironic and amusing to see a capitalist doing the work they used to use others for in order to gain profit? That is something I would certainly enjoy seeing. Thank you for reading, comrades. •



THE AMERICAN MYTH

Why the left should reject America
and fight for decolonization

by O.C. Antifascist

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n a daily basis we encounter stories of the atrocities that the United States commits against the poor and struggling masses of the world. Whether it's airstrikes that kill hundreds of innocents in Iraq and Syria, or racist pigs enacting a protracted genocide against people of color 'at home' - the sheer terror that the white supremacist settler colony imposes unnecessarily on the world is incalculably devastating. This isn't something determined by the individual wills of those in power, but the underlying superstructure of the capitalist state - those policies and actions that do not massively shift with a change in presidency or electoral makeup of congress. The American state kills because that is what it is designed to do in order to prevent the destruction of the system that perpetuates it. Just as useful to American capitalism as violence, however, is a toxic ideological mythology, used to keep the masses in line, distracted, misinformed, and most importantly - at each other's throats.

At the core of this genocidal beast, born from the destruction of native peoples and built up from the blood-soaked ground by the forced labor of millions of enslaved Africans, there is a mythology that holds

together its unholy body and renders its atrocities acceptable to many. The story goes more or less like this - to escape the oppression of the old world, white settlers, guided by their religious faith, came to the "new world" to build their promised land. When they arrived, they found their promised land inhabited by heathens, who needed to be converted or exterminated. In furthering their god's will, they took it upon themselves not only to kill mercilessly and take the land for themselves, but to enslave others to work that land, establishing a clear and godly hierarchy by which to build their white Christian utopia. This utopia - their 'shining city upon a hill' - would become the bearer of the values of liberty, equality, and freedom. This, of course, means liberty for the white man to keep the land under his dominion, freedom for the white man to use property to exploit, and consequently, equality in no material way.

This mythology is rested upon two major pillars that came to dominate American life - Christianity and White Supremacy. These pillars would be used constantly and consistently over the course of American history to justify and obfuscate the realities of capitalist oppression.

Time and time again, whiteness was used as a means to divide the working class, pitting natural class allies against each other and preventing broad unity from materializing. Unfortunately, this has largely been a successful endeavour. By the virtue of the white settler Amerikan working class's comparably privileged lifestyle, not only has a genuinely communistic mass movement failed to gain ground in the US, the class has generally gravitated in the opposite direction. Instead of being the mark of social and political resistance against bourgeois dominance, the white settler working class has instead become the bulwark of reactionary and fascistic movements, aiming to further their place within the world order at the expense of the global proletariat. This is why the Communist movement in the first world - those who genuinely believe that reformism and revisionism are not the paths to follow - must center anti-imperialism. Defending people and workers governments (and even in cases like Syria, bourgeois nationalist governments) within the Imperialist core is a task that urgently needs to be taken up by comrades in their thousands.

An anti-war movement, easily co-opted by liberals and sections of the elite classes is obviously insufficient. What is needed is an explicitly anti-imperialist movement that not only denounces the US interventions and wars overseas, but recognizes that these policies are a part of its DNA. We need to be up front that ending imperialism will mean ending America.

Now, more than ever, it is vital for the radical left to repudiate America - both in its historical and contemporary political forms as well as any future that it has while grounded in white supremacist capitalism-imperialism. We must make it clear that America has no future in the world we would like to envision. There can never be a "socialist America" because the victory of a genuine proletarian revolution will necessarily involve the dismantling of America.

Every communist in the Imperial core must accept this basic truth - there can be no socialism on stolen land. The vision for a socialist future is one of a dictatorship of the oppressed against the oppressors, flipping the current social relations on its head. What more fertile grounds for decolonization exist than one of communist transformation?

In order for that true emancipation to be a reality, a long yet necessary period of decolonization has to be brought forth. Although it would be highly speculative to spell out the details of this process at this early stage of struggle, its basic elements should be clear - the ceding of land back to native peoples and the colonies back to the colonized. •

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